

has created a real-time, web-based burn-bed capacity system in the national emergency preparedness center and funded Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS) and clinical, on-site burn nurse training for 200 public health service nurses as a reserve capacity for potential mass burn casualty incidents, as well as supporting more than 20 ABLS courses with over 600 first-responders in ten key areas of the country.

The 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C., and major accidents like the Rhode Island nightclub fire and North Carolina chemical plant explosions demonstrate the substantial number of burn injuries that can result from such events. Over one-third of those hospitalized in New York on 9/11 had severe burn injuries. The Department of Homeland Security has recognized that there would be mass burn casualties in terrorist acts, and there is a need for appropriate preparedness activities. For example, if the United States should suffer further terrorist attacks using explosions, incendiary devices or chemical weapons, most victims would suffer severe burn injuries.

Even a relatively modest number of burn injuries can consume large segments of the nation's burn bed capacity. For example, the victims of the Rhode Island nightclub fire absorbed the burn bed capacity of most of the northern East Coast of the United States. Mass burn casualties that reach into the hundreds or thousands would strain the system to the breaking point.

It is clear that burn centers are a national resource and a critical link to public health emergency preparedness. Medicare coverage for serious, disabling burn injuries would enable these burn centers to remain financially viable and preserve an essential component of our public health emergency infrastructure.

This legislation follows an approach already taken with respect to End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease), both of which result in waivers of the 24-month waiting period for Medicare eligibility. While these two diseases tend to be progressive in nature, the very initial phase of a serious burn injury is when things are most acute.

Providing immediate Medicare coverage for uninsured patients suffering serious, disabling burn injuries is a fully justified and necessary step. Although not all hospitalized burn injuries would qualify as "disabling" and thus result in immediate Medicare coverage, this legislation is about providing coverage for the many uninsured patients suffering from serious burn injuries and ensuring the survival of a vital national resource that already is in jeopardy, a situation we cannot accept as we seek to prepare the nation to deal with potential mass casualty terrorist events.

PARAMOUNT 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, 50 years ago, on January 30, 1957, the village residents of Clearwater and Hynes, who shared a five-square mile area of Southeast Los Angeles, came together

to preserve a way of life by merging their communities into the City of Paramount.

Clearwater, first settled in 1886, and Hynes, settled in 1898, were two villages mutually bonded through their shared dairy and hay industries. The new city was named after the main boulevard that ran through the business district. At the time of Paramount's incorporation, the area was one of the Nation's largest dairy producers and the world's biggest receiving point for hay. Paramount began as home to more cows than people, with an estimated 25,000 cows in its city limits. During this time Paramount did \$1 million worth of business a month—\$150,000 from cream alone. As the dairies thrived, so did the banks, grocery stores, businesses, and restaurants downtown.

During the 1960s and 70s, Paramount transitioned into a more urban landscape with many of the dairies moving out to more rural areas, taking a large portion of the local workforce with them. Neighboring and nearby cities built suburban shopping malls and housing developments, which strained the small merchants of Paramount and aided in the City's loss of business revenue.

By the late 1970s, the major agricultural centers of Paramount, known for its dairies and hay market, fields and feedlots, were overtaken by concrete and asphalt. Unfortunately, county planners thought Paramount was better suited for auto repair shops and salvage yards. The following years brought uncontrolled growth and ultimately lead to an overbuilt environment that eventually deteriorated in many areas of town. Despite such challenges, Paramount's fate was not sealed.

Paramount became the exception to the rule. The City took heed of its "disaster area" status in the early 1980s and, rather than sink under the weight of its problems, chose a proactive plan to turn itself around. This eventually turned Paramount's "Rust Belt" status into "The Revitalization of Paramount."

The City launched a concerted effort to make physical improvements everywhere in town. By using municipal tools like zoning ordinances, planning regulations, design guidelines, redevelopment, and economic incentives, the City took it upon itself to inspire its residents and business owners to think big and reach for something more. Thus began Paramount's turnaround.

By confronting urban blight and providing exceptional city services, Paramount thrived economically and culturally. Paramount, California is now known for its successful transformation and its attractive business climate and quality of life. The City has received numerous awards for its forward thinking.

Today, Paramount is a growing community of landscaped boulevards, enhanced police service, parks, recreation programs, affordable housing, public art, and tree-lined neighborhoods with white picket fences.

I want to share Paramount's success with the rest of our Nation as a model of one city's can-do attitude and ability to overcome the destruction that urban blight can wreak on our most precious assets—our communities and the people that live in them.

TRIBUTE TO CARLOS LEZAMA, FATHER OF THE LABOR DAY CARNIVAL IN BROOKLYN

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

Ms. CLARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay homage to a great American, a role model, leader, innovator and certainly one of the finest gentlemen in the history of my home state of New York.

I extend my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Carlos Lezama, the Father of Brooklyn's world-famous West Indian-American Labor Day Carnival.

Carlos Lezama was born of humble beginnings in the Caribbean nation of Trinidad & Tobago.

What is now the largest outdoor summer festival in the United States began over 40 years ago as a small celebration of Caribbean immigrants in Harlem. It was initially held each February to coincide with Carnival celebrations in Trinidad & Tobago. As the wintry weather typical of New York in February began to impact the nascent celebration, Mr. Lezama moved Carnival to Labor Day Weekend and relocated the festivities to Brooklyn, in the heart of the eleventh Congressional District. Under Carlos' guidance and innovation, Brooklyn's Labor Day Carnival has grown to attract more than four million participants every year from all walks of life across the city and across the Nation.

Carlos molded a nostalgic longing for "the old country" into an integral part of the fabric of New York City. For immigrant families like my own, Labor Day Carnival has always been a source of pride. Its very existence says there is a place for me in this great Nation; my parents are Caribbean-Americans who emigrated from Jamaica to this country in search of the American dream. The success of Labor Day Carnival and Mr. Lezama himself is a testament to the promise of America.

Carlos Lezama passed away on Tuesday, January 22, 2007. As he joins the ancestors, it is my honor to salute him. A great son of Trinidad and Tobago and a great American; Carlos Lezama will be sorely missed.

TRAVIS McCORMICK KLEENWOOD DAY

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, Saturday, January 27, 2007, is not an ordinary day for the community of Kingwood, Texas. Before many people get out of bed, residents will be up armed with trash bags waging a war against litter.

The "Travis McCormick Kleenwood Day" is an annual event where people of all ages volunteer to clean up their neighborhoods. They don't do it because they have to; they do it because they have pride in their community.

This year will mark the fourth annual Kleenwood Day. This effort is spearheaded by Kingwood Chamber of Commerce President Sparky Nolan. Because of Sparky's determination and enthusiasm, the number of volunteers continues to grow exponentially.